

Frederick County
Development Review Outreach Meeting
Number 37
July 27, 2007
9:00 a.m.

Outreach Minutes

1) Prior Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the prior Outreach meeting and the July 27, 2007 agenda were distributed. It was also noted, that the minutes and agenda are available in the Division of Permits and Development Review (DPDR) office and accessible on its website.

2) Processing and Fee Updates

a) Applications

New application forms for Subdivisions, Combined Plats, Farm Lots, as well as other forms are available on-line and at the customer service counter on the first floor of the Division of Permitting & Development Review located at 30 North Market Street. To ensure that the most up-to-date forms are used, at time of application, it is recommended that the forms that are used are downloaded from DPDR's website.

b) Comment Letters

Due to the departure of Sue Putman, which resulted in a staff shortage, comments are not currently being FAXED. DPDR stated they are attempting to resume FAXING comments and recommended accessing comments on-line. However, those needing FAXED comments were asked to contact Desiray Lee at 301-600-1134 with their request for FAXED comments. This request should include the phone and FAX number of the requestor.

An attendee stated that on-line comments do not show the "canned" comments. DPDR informed attendees that this is a Hansen reporting issue.

c) Fees – Changes July 1, 2007

Fees increases were primarily a result of the cost of living (COLA) and based on a percentage established by industry standards. Since DPDR is enterprise funded, new fees cover salaries, overhead, building, and supplies. Some fee increases were made for specific project types that were not covering staff costs and fee increases were targeted to achieve this goal. These include Site Plans, Preliminary Plans, and Revised Subdivision Plans.

The following new fees became effective July 1, 2007:

- Grading Permit Administrative Processing fees
- Deeds of Abandonment fees
- Administrative Review fees

DPDR's fee schedule is available at the customer service counter and may also be accessed on-line. The fee schedule has been formatted to separate the "initial fee" from the remaining fees for clarity. The amount of additional fees to be paid, prior to subsequent submission, will appear in Hansen. DPDR staff will make sure the required fees are paid before routing plans for further review.

Fees for other departments, including the Health Department, are collected by DPDR. However, it is requested, that the appropriate department is contacted directly for information regarding their specific existing fee structure.

3) Process Changes

The Development Review office is looking into the feasibility of establishing a payment system that will allow payment by debit and credit cards. The current process entails payment of fees by cash or check prior to processing an application. The initial fee was set in place to provide a standard fee that would cover processing and the time required for a staff member to conduct the initial review. Remaining fees, which often require additional calculations, are accepted in cash or by check after payment of the initial fee and at a later date. Prior to the second submission, all payments must be made to the Treasurer.

An applicant requesting perc testing from the Health Department of a farm lot(s) must verify that the lot(s) are actually being farmed or their application will be processed as a Preliminary/Final Plat.

Mark Depo stated that his staff is following the code, if it is clearly in the code, the changes will be required immediately. However, if it is not clear, it will be recommended that changes follow the normal process.

4) Staffing Issues

a) Development Review Tech

This position closed on Wednesday, July 25th and we hope to fill the position by early September.

b) Principal Planner

This was Justin Horman's previous job. Justin's new duties involve working on Site Plan enforcement and monitoring APFO compliance.

c) Traffic Engineer

This position has been advertised four times and it is extremely difficult to find a qualified candidate. Interviews are scheduled for mid August.

d) Engineering Manager

The individual hired for this position will be assuming some of Betsy's current tasks. It is anticipated that it will be advertised in early fall.

5) FRO Updates

The fee change is effective July 19, 2007 and will be in increments of 35¢, 43¢, and 53¢ per square foot. All new applications after July 19, 2007 are subject to more stringent reforestation requirements. In addition, FIPA's may be required for 2 to 3 years depending on the type of reforestation. Two reforestation calculations are being used, one is a 1 to 1 replacement and the other is unchanged. The more stringent calculation will be the one to use. Also, there were miscellaneous administrative changes to clean up and fix the ordinance. The changes made to the FRO ordinance as well as the new ordinance are on-line. Mark Depo stated that a workshop

is being considered and that surveyors and engineers will be notified if it is scheduled. Attendees were instructed to email either Mark Depo or Stephen O'Phillips with questions concerning the FRO update.

6) Stream Buffer Requirements

Tim Goodfellow is the Planner processing this code change. Mark is going to meet with Tim to see how the requirements will affect the Development Review and it's process.

7) Text Amendments

Applicants and DPDR staff must receive permission from the Board of County Commissioners to proceed with text amendments. Following BOCC approval, DPDR staff writes and advertises the amendment.

8) SWM Changes in State Law

Several storm water bills have been passed by the state legislature including the 2007 Storm Water Act. Betsy Smith will be attending a panel led by and held at the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) on environmental site design techniques. Betsy will email panel comments to Outreach members. MDE hopes to provide a model ordinance by January 2008, with one year to implement

9) Open Discussion

- a) Chris Gauss indicated that small firms are unable to regularly check the DPDR web page and suggested DPDR consider another more timely and effective method of notifying attendees of policy changes.
- b) The consultants indicated that a new requirement is in place that requires that a PE seal must be dated on all submittals.

10) Emails

Several attendees complained that their emails were not being answered in a timely manner.

Betsy Smith requested that attendees inform her or Mark Depo when a staff member does not provide a timely response to one of their emails. Upon being notified, Betsy or Mark will find out why their email has not been answered and ensure a response is sent.

11) Closing

The next Outreach Meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 26, 2007.